

Testimony before the Judiciary Committee, February 18, 2015

By Alan Brumbaugh of Derby, KS

Senators, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about S.B. 149 and the Sexual Predator Treatment Program that it addresses.

My reasons for wanting to testify on this issue include:

1. my long acquaintance with a resident at the SPTP in Larned,
2. my long acquaintance with the mental health community because of an adult son who lives with schizo-affective disorder,
3. my NOT so long acquaintance with the legislative process and the legal language of 34 page bills.

I have been aware of the SPTP for over a decade because my wife and I visit a resident of the Larned facility who I had as a student in my junior high Industrial Arts class in Coffeyville, Kansas. I shepherded him some in the church we attended. We have visited him two to four times a year and have clearly noted aspects of the SPTP that are disturbing. The men go in thinking they will receive therapy leading to release, but experience an increasingly punitive existence. They lose hope, because they try to “complete the phases” but realize that nobody gets out.

I clearly do not have time here to adequately relay many of my observations and experiences (...and my wife frequently reminds me that I take too long to explain things). Some of these concerns are brought to light in documents prepared by some concerned groups.

It is clear that, until the last couple years, the protests of “bad stuff” regarding the SPTP were dismissed as overzealous individuals with only a personal fringe agenda. A number of us who are involved with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) began to connect these individuals and clearly realize some disturbing patterns.

To the credit of the legislature, an earlier post audit report urged some closer attention to the SPTP. I will also credit KDADS with establishing the SPTP Friends and Family Advisory Committee, (...and their wisdom for ...choosing such and expert as me to be on the committee).

THE major request I have of you is ...don't pass this bill now. Wait for the post audit report expected in March. In the meantime, ask lots of questions about the history, statistics, practices and expectations of SPTP.